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Shuttle crew members shift; another added to STS-118

◆ **Shuttle Update:** NASA astronaut and Air Force Col. Benjamin Alvin Drew will join the crew of the STS-118 space shuttle mission, targeted for launch Aug. 9. Drew will take a seat that opened when astronaut Clayton Anderson was moved to shuttle Atlantis' STS-117 flight, which is targeted to launch June 8. Anderson will begin a long-duration mission on the International Space Station, and current station crew member Suni Williams will return to Earth aboard Atlantis. Shuttle Endeavour will carry Drew on his first spaceflight. He will serve as a mission specialist during STS-118, which will deliver another segment to continue building the station for completion by 2010.



◆ **ELV Update:**

The Dawn spacecraft is targeted for launch no earlier than June 30. In the Payload Processing Facility at Astrotech, comprehensive spacecraft system performance testing continues. Instrument final alignment is under way. A test of the spacecraft's primary communications antenna is scheduled for May 21. The spacecraft solar arrays will be attached and deployed May 21 - 24. No spacecraft issues or concerns have arisen during testing to date.

■ **The Phoenix Mars Lander Arrives** — On May 7, the Phoenix Mars Lander arrived at the Shuttle Landing Facility and was transported to the Payload Hazardous Servicing Facility where it will undergo processing. Scheduled for launch in August, the Phoenix Mars Mis-

sion is the first in NASA's Scout Program. Phoenix is designed to study the history of water and habitability potential in the Martian arctic's ice-rich soil.

■ **May Is "Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month"** — To honor the achievements and contributions of Asian/Pacific Americans, KSC is celebrating this year's theme, "Pursuing Excellence Through Leadership, Diversity and Unity," with a collaborative commemoration by USA's Office of Diversity and Compliance, the Boeing Asian American Professional Association, the Japanese Aerospace and Exploration Agency, and the KSC AAPI Working Group.

Please join KSC executive leaders from 1 to 2 p.m. on Friday at the KSC Training Auditorium. The rich cultural program includes the guest speaker Judge A.B. Majeed, Brevard County Court, 18th Judicial Circuit, and several cultural performances. All personnel are invited. Light traditional refreshments will immediately follow.

Please contact Diana Navas at diana.s.navas@usa-spaceops.com or Paula Nosca Lay at paula.nosca-lay@boeing.com with any questions.

■ **NASA News** — On Saturday, teams from around the nation will compete at the Santa Maria Fairpark in Santa Maria, Calif., for a total of \$250,000 from NASA for an autonomously operating system to excavate simulated "lunar regolith," or the moon's soil. The Regolith Excavation Challenge, one of NASA's seven Centennial Challenges, will take place

Dawn processing goes smoothly

NASA is offering \$250,000 to the team whose system can excavate and deliver as much regolith as possible in 30 minutes. Competitors' machines must use less than 30 W of power, weigh less than 40 kg. and excavate more than 150 kg. of the simulated moon dirt. The unique physical properties of lunar regolith make excavation a difficult technical challenge, but it is a necessary first step toward uncovering the moon's resources.



■ **Hurricane Preparedness**

Week — The week of May 20 is designated Hurricane Preparedness Week throughout our state. Each day of the week, a featured topic will be presented at the Web site:

<http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/HAW2/english/intro.shtml>. Please take the time to review these important preparation steps before the season starts on June 1.

■ **NASA Science** — NASA-supported scientists and engineers have successfully tested a methane-powered rocket engine. The firing was not only remarkably beautiful but also may herald a new type of spacecraft that one day roams the outer solar system gathering fuel from planets and moons that it visits. You can read the full story and see the results at: http://science.nasa.gov/headlines/y2007/04may_methaneblast.htm?list29875.

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